

Five fire departments in Georgia's Second Congressional Districts are among the most recent grants to be awarded nationwide under the new federal Assistance to Firefighter Grant program administered by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Representative Sanford Bishop announced.

The Second District Congressman said both the Gordy Volunteer Fire Department in Sylvester and the Anderson City Volunteer Fire Department in Doerun City are receiving a grant of \$171,000 each for firefighting vehicles. The Bridgeboro Volunteer Fire Department in Bridgeboro City is receiving a grant of \$21,438; Chula Volunteer Fire Department in Chula is receiving \$44,985 and the Westside Volunteer Fire Department in Moultrie is receiving \$36,072 for Fire Operations and Firefighting Safety.

In 2003, there are four programs area that are supported through the Assistance to Firefighter Grants.

Fire Operations and Firefighter Safety Program. Includes training, wellness and fitness, firefighting equipment, personal protective equipment, and modifications to fire stations and facilities.

Fire Prevention Program. Includes public education and awareness activities, fire codes enforcement activities, fire inspector certifications, purchase and installation of smoke alarms and fire suppression systems, wild land fire mitigation, and arson prevention and detection activities.

Emergency Medical Services Program. Includes equipment, training, and wellness and fitness initiatives for fire-based EMS units.

Firefighting Vehicles Acquisition Program. Includes pumpers, brush trucks, tankers, rescue, ambulances, quints, aerials, foam units, and fireboats.

"The Homeland Security Agency will be making weekly announcement for the next 12-14 months. Thus far we are now through the eighth round of awards," Representative Bishop said.

Under the new federal grant program, recipients share in the cost at a percentage based on the population of the community, with jurisdictions of 50,000 or fewer resident providing 10 percent of the cost and those with more than 50,000 providing 30 percent, the Congressman explained.